

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3799

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 0784

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, US, IN

SUBJECT: CODEL DIGGS TALK WITH FOREIGN SECRETARY SHAHI

1. A COUPLE OF THINGS EMERGED DURING THE CALL OF CODEL DIGGS ON FOREIGN SECRETEEY AGHA SHAHI THAT WERE NOT INCLUDED IN OUR ROUTINE REPORT OF THIS VISIT (ISLAMABAD 0718) FOR REASONS OF CLASSIFICATION.

2. CONGRESSMAN DIGGS OPENED THE CONVERSATION BY SAYING HE HAD BEEN SURPRISED IN HIS JUST CONCLUDED PRESS CONFERENCE BY THE EMPHASIS GIVEN BY HIS PAK QUESTIONERS ON NUCLEAR MATTERS. HE SAID HE HAD TAKEN THE POSITION THAT THERE WERE OF COURSE PEACEFUL USES FOR NUCLEAR ENERGY, AND ASKED SHAHI IF THE EMPHASIS GIVEN THIS SUBJECT IN THE PRESS CONFERENCE REFLECTED A REAL CONCERN ON THE PART OF PAKISTAN.

3. SHAHI GAVE A VERY LONG REPLY - STRESSING THAT THE CONCERN THAT DIGGS HAD SENSED WAS A VERY REAL CONCERN ON THE PART OF THE PEOPLE OF PAKISTAN, AND PARTICULARLY OF COURSE SINCE INDIA'S NUCLEAR EXPLOSION. HE SAID THIS CONCERN HAD GONE BACK OVER SEVERAL YEARS, AND AS LONG AGO AS 1965 THEY HAD WARNED THE CANADIANS THAT THEY WERE BEING TOO LAX IN THE B NUCLEAR SUPPLY TO INDIA WITHOUT ADEQUATE RESTRICTIONS AND SAFEGUARDS. SHAHI ENDED HIS HISTORICAL ACCOUNT BY SAYING HE HAD WISHED THAT THE USG HAD BEEN MORE FORCEFUL IN CONDEMNING THE NUCLEAR EXPLOSION IN INDIA.

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4. SHAHI THEN EXPLAINED IN DETAIL THE EFFORTS OF

PAKISTAN, AND HE PERSONALLY, TO SECURE SOME KIND OF NUCLEAR FREE ZONE ARRANGEMENT IN SOUTH ASIA, SAYING THAT PAKISTAN DID IN FACT FEEL EXPOSED SINCE THE FAILURE OF THE NPT TREATY SEEMED NOW TO BE A FACT OF LIFE. HE THOUGHT THEY BROUGHT REAL DANGER TO THE SUBCONTINENT AND PROBABLY IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HE MADE REFERENCE TO THE FACT THAT THE USSR, ACCORDING TO A RECENT PRESS RELEASE IN PARIS, HAD IN FACT EXTENDED THEIR NUCLEAR UMBRELLA OVER INDIA. THE SOVIETS, THROUGH PRESSURES ON PAKISTAN TO SUPPORT THE ASIA COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM, AND IN OTHER PERIPHERAL WAYS, WERE NOW BEING MORE BLUNT THAN EVER BEFORE. HE ASKED RHETORICALLY HOW COULD PAKISTAN STAND UP TO SOVIET THREATS IF IT CONCLUDES THAT THE U.S. COULD NOT BE COUNTED ON TO HELP COUNTER THE THREAT OF A NUCLEAR INDIA. HE MADE CLEAR THAT HE WAS NOT REFERRING IN ANY WAY TO U.S. FORCES EVER BECOMING DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN PAKISTAN, NOR WAS HE SUGGESTING THAT WE EXTEND A NUCLEAR UMBRELLA OVER PAKISTAN TO MATCH THE LATEST RUSSIAN MOVE. WHAT HE HAD BEEN CONTINUALLY SEARCHING FOR IN THIS MATTER WAS A FORMULA THAT THE U.S. COULD SUPPORT WHICH WOULD BRING WORLD MORAL AND PUBLIC OPINION TO FOCUS ON ARRANGEMENTS WHICH WOULD INHIBIT INDIA FROM THE ACTUAL MANUFACTURE AND STOCKPILING OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS PER SE. I INTERJECTED THAT THERE WAS REALLY NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST BETWEEN WHAT AGHA SHIHI WAS SEARCHING FOR AND THE POLICY OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. THE PROBLEM SIMPLY BOILED DOWN TO THE DIFFICULTY IN FINDING A PRACTICAL AND MEANINGFUL WAY IN WHICH TO PUT TEETH INTO THE PROCESS WHICH SHAHI WAS SEARCHING FOR, AS VAGUE GUARANTEES REALLY DID NOT MEET THE PROBLEM AND AS SPECIFIC GUARANTEES OF THE TYPE HE OBVIOUSLY HOPED FOR WERE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO COME BY ON A MEANINGFUL BASIS.

5. IN THIS EXCHANGE, CODEL MENTIONED IN GENERAL TERMS THAT THE U.S. CONGRESS WAS DETERMINED TO ASSERT ITSELF CONFIDENTIAL

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TO A FAR GREATER EXTENT THAN IT HAD IN THE PAST OVER THE FORMULATION AND EXECUTION OF FOREIGN POLICY. IN A VERY POINTED REMARK, SHAHI POLITELY TOLD CODEL THAT IF THE CONGRESS WISHES TO ASSERT ITSELF MORE IT MUST ALSO REALIZE THAT IT MUST ALSO ACCEPT IN LIKE MEASURE AN AWESOME SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY, AS THE CREDIBILITY OF U.S. COMMITMENTS AND ASSURANCES WAS AT STAKE AND HE HOPED THAT

CONGRESS WOULD REALIZE THAT TREMENDOUS MORAL AND SECURITY COMMITMENTS AFFECTING THE STRUCTURE OF WORLD PEACE AND WELL-BEING WERE INVOLVED.

6. IN ALONG DISCUSSION ON ANGOLA, SHAHI TENDED TO THRUST ASIDE DETAILS ADVANCED BY CODEL IMPLYING IMPROPER HANDLING OF THE USG IN THE RECENT PAST. TIME AND TIME AGAIN SHAHI BROUGHTCODEL BACK TO HIS MAIN POINT WHICH WAS SIMPLY THAT, DESPITE ALL THE DETAILS, THE SOVIET BACKED FACTION SEEMED TO BE WINNING AND THOSE BEING BACKED BY THE U.S. SEEMED TO BE LOSING. SHAHI SUGGESTED TO CODEL THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO THINK IN THESE BROAD TERMS,AS REPERCUSSIONS AROUND THE WORLD WOULD BE BASED UPON SUCH SIMPLE ANALYSES. IN MAKING THESE FORCEFUL STATEMENTS SHAHI WAS OF COURSE FOLLOWING THE GENERAL LINE THAT BHUTTO HAD PREVIOUSLY TAKEN WITH CODEL AS REPORTED IN ISLAMABAD 0518. BUTHE WAS ALSO EXPRESSING DEEP PERSONAL CONVICTION AS REFLECTED IN PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS WITH ME GROWING OUT OF ANGOLA WHICH REFLECTS AN INTELLECTUAL CONCERN OVER THE CONTINUED IMAGE OF THE U.S. IN WORLD AFFAIRS.
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